

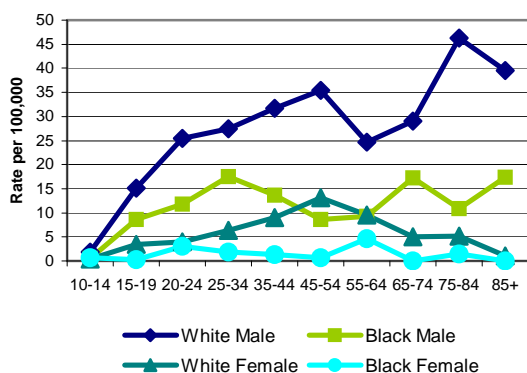
Suicide: Findings from the South Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (SCVDRS), 2003-2005

The South Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (SCVDRS) is part of the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS). It integrates data from death certificates, coroner reports and law enforcement reports. The data presented in this newsletter reflect suicide occurring in South Carolina (SC) from years 2003 to 2005, regardless of place of residence of the decedent. The exceptions to this are the leading causes of death for SC, which are SC residence data.

Suicide Overview

- Suicide was the eleventh leading cause of death among SC residents for years 2003 to 2005, which is the same ranking as national data¹.
- Suicides accounted for 1.3% of all deaths in the SC.
- Totally 1,507 suicides occurred in SC from year 2003 to 2005. This represents an average of 1.4 suicides per day; or 11.9 suicides per 100,000 population.
- White males aged 75-84 years had the highest rate (46.3 per 100,000) of suicide deaths among age-race-sex groups (Figure 1).
- Divorced people had the highest suicide rate (34.2 per 100,000) of all marital status groups.

Figure 1. Suicide Rate by Age, Gender, and Race 2003-2005



Marital Status	Number	Percent	Rate
Married	667	44.7	12.2
Never Married	418	27.9	16.9
Widowed	110	7.5	16
Divorced	298	19.9	34.2

Note: Marital Status of Victims of Age 15 and older; Rate per 100,000 population.

Gender Disparities

- Suicide was the seventh leading cause of death for SC males and the sixteenth leading cause of death for SC females from 2003 to 2005.
- Male victims had a 4 times higher rate (19.5 per 100,000) of death by suicide than female (4.8 per 100,000).
- Among males, those 75-84 years old had the highest rate of suicide (39.7 per 100,000; see Figure 2).
- Among females, those 45-54 years old had the highest rate of suicide (9.2 per 100,000, Figure2).

Figure 2. Age-specific Suicide Rates for Males and Females, 2003-2005

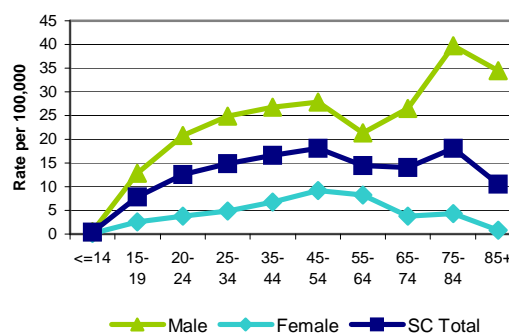
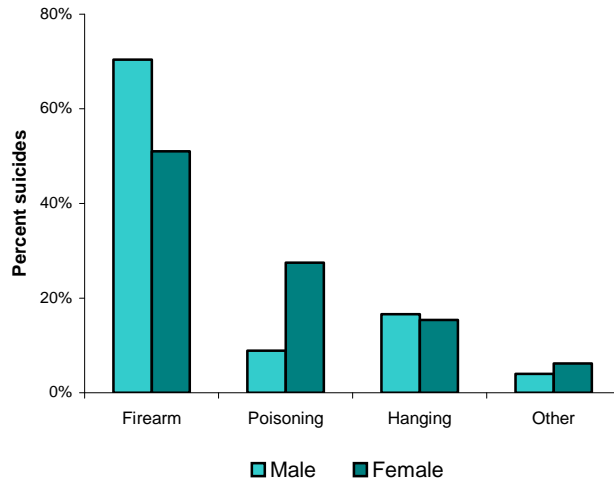


Figure 3. Mechanism of Suicide, by gender, 2003-2005



- Males completed suicide most often through the use of firearms (70%), while females completed suicide through the use of firearms in 51% of cases (Figure 3).
- Females (28%) were three times more likely than males (9%) to complete suicide by poisoning (Figure 3).
- Males were more likely to have been experiencing an intimate partner problem and alcohol problem contributing to their suicide than females (Figure 4, 5).
- Females were more likely than males to have a physical health problem, mental health problem and depression mood at the time of their suicides (Figure 4).
- Female victims were more likely to leave a suicide note or have a history of attempting suicide than males (Figure 5).

Figure 4. Circumstances Reported among SC Suicides by gender, 2003-2005

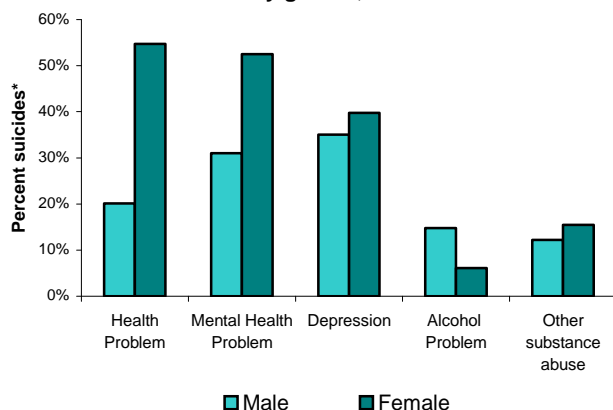
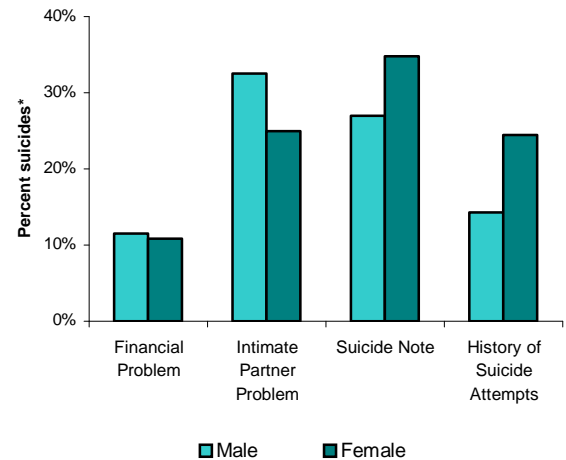


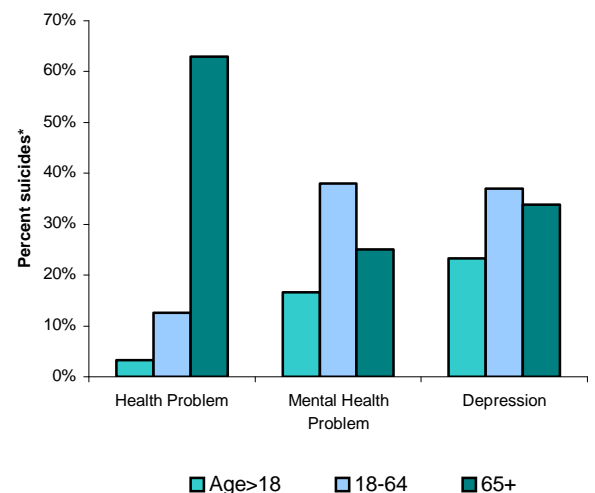
Figure 5. Circumstances Reported among SC Suicides by gender, 2003-2005



Age Group Difference

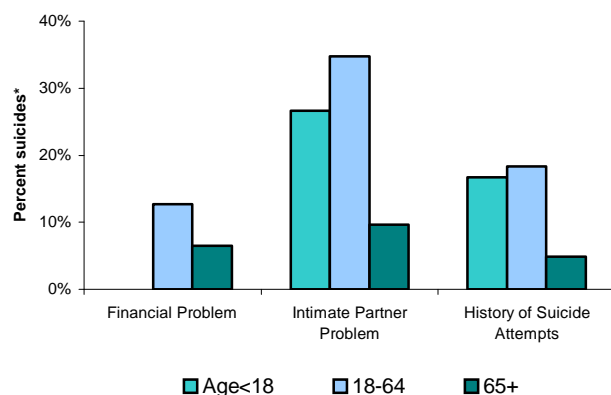
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among SC residents aged 20-34 years and the third leading cause of death among SC residents 15-19 years old.
- The age group with the highest rate of suicide death is 45-54 and 75-84 years, with the suicide rate of 18.2 per 100,000 and 18.1 per 100,000 respectively (Figure 2).

Figure 6. Circumstances Reported among SC Suicides by age, 2003-2005



- Persons aged 65 and older were more likely to have a physical health problem at the time of their suicide. While adult victims aged 18-64 were more likely to have a mental health problem and depression mood than other age categories (Figure 6).
- Adults aged 18-64 were more likely to have been experiencing intimate partner problems and financial problems contributing to their suicide than other age groups (Figure7).
- Both youth and adults were more likely to have a history of attempting suicide compared to persons aged 65 and older (Figure7).

Figure 7. Circumstances Reported among SC Suicides by age, 2003-2005

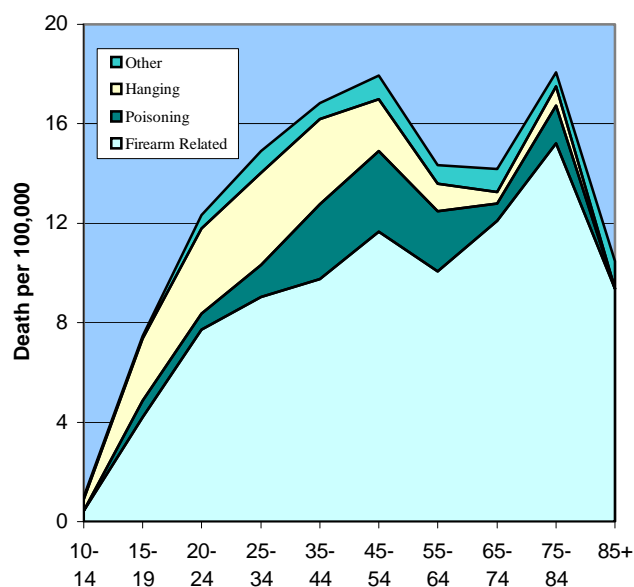


*Percentage calculated among suicides with known circumstances.

Suicide Method and Toxicology Test

- Firearms were the leading method of suicide for all age groups of SC victims (Figure 8).
- Among SC suicides with toxicology tests being conducted, 34% (308 of 905) tested positive for alcohol; 16.6% (100 of 602) for antidepressants; 12.3% (74 of 603) for cocaine; 11.5% (69 of 602) for opiates; 8.3% (50 of 599) for marijuana; and 5.5% (33 of 599) for amphetamines.

Figure 8. Suicide Rate by Age and Method, 2003-2005



References

1. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [Online]. (2005). National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, CDC (producer). Available from URL: www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars/default.htm.